

Ottawa Journal: Canada's contribution to fight terrorism in Iraq

The situation in Iraq continues to grow more and more tragic. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has conducted a campaign of unspeakable atrocities ? beheadings, rape, slavery ? on the most innocent of people, all because they think differently from ISIL.

And recently, brutal attacks related to extremism have been inflicted on Canada. First it was in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec, where two members of our Canadian Armed Forces were senselessly run down by a man who, according to Canadian national security services, had become radicalized. Our Government continues to offer our deepest condolences to the family and friends of the members involved.

Two days later, we faced another attack on home soil in the Nation's Capital ? a fatal shooting at the National War Memorial and then shots in the Centre Block of Parliament Hill. As Prime Minister Stephen Harper said, ??let there be no misunderstanding. We will not be intimidated. Canada will never be intimidated.? Indeed, we will remain vigilant against those at home or abroad who wish to harm us.

But these senseless acts of violence will only strengthen our resolve as Canadians. It's the least we can do to honour the memory of Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent and Corporal Nathan Cirillo.

Meanwhile, our Government is proud to remain in strong condemnation of the actions of ISIL.

We have joined our allies ? the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Australia, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and others ? in launching air strikes against ISIL.

We are also contributing one air-to-air refuelling aircraft, two Aurora surveillance aircraft, and the necessary air crews and support personnel. In addition, we are extending the deployment announced in September of the Canadian Armed Forces, in a non-combat role, to continue to advise and assist security forces in Iraq.

This builds on the previous action our Government has taken to respond to the humanitarian crisis in Iraq. We dispatched relief supplies for refugees including tents, blankets, and kitchen and hygiene kits with the help of the Red Cross. We also continue to work with organizations such as Save the Children Canada and Mercy Corps. In addition to providing supplies to those displaced by the violence, we are also providing medical supplies to health facilities and helping with emergency repairs to water and sanitation facilities.

If left unhindered, this terrorist threat will only grow. This is why, as our allies have recognized and responded to ISIL, we've joined the cause. Canada will not stand on the sidelines, we will do our part. Our Government is standing up for the safety and security of Canadian families and innocent civilians around the world.

By David Tilson MP